



**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
U.S. EMBASSY MBABANE PUBLIC AFFAIRS SECTION  
NOTICE OF FUNDING OPPORTUNITY**

**Funding Opportunity Title:** American Spaces Eswatini Notice of Funding Opportunity  
**Announcement Type:** Limited Competition, Cooperative Agreement  
**Funding Opportunity Number:** PAS-MBA-FY20-02  
**CFDA Number:** 19.040 – Public Diplomacy Programs  
**Date Opened:** July 25, 2020  
**Closing Date:** August 25, 2020  
**Federal Agency Email:** [pdmbabane.grants@state.gov](mailto:pdmbabane.grants@state.gov)

## **1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The U.S. Embassy Mbabane Public Affairs Section (PAS) of the U.S. Department of State announces an open competition for non-governmental and non-profit organizations to submit applications to manage the strategic events and programs of the American Spaces in Eswatini (ASE).

Working closely with PAS, the award recipient will be responsible for the administration of the programs and events, management of existing and new local team members, outreach and program promotion, providing monitoring and support services, conducting evaluation and reporting of the three American Spaces. The duration of the cooperative agreement will be one year, beginning **October 1, 2020 and ending on September 30, 2021**. Depending on the availability of funds and satisfactory performance, the Public Diplomacy Section may renew this cooperative agreement for one additional consecutive fiscal year before openly competing it again.

Interested organizations must be able to demonstrate their capacity to receive and manage grant funding, plan and facilitate programs and events, and successfully engage with youth.

A grant committee will select the award recipient based on the merits of each proposal and will look to announce the selected implementing partner before **September 15, 2020**.

It is anticipated that the total amount of funding for this Notice of Funding (NOFO) will be up to **\$16,000.00**.

Applicants may submit only one proposal under this competition. If multiple proposals are received from the same applicant, all submissions will be disqualified and ineligible to receive further consideration in the review process.

## **2. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION**

### **2.1 Background Information:**

PAS manages three public engagement venues called American Spaces in Eswatini (ASE). These are located in Ezulwini (U.S. Embassy) Mbabane (Public Library), and Nhlangano (Public



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Library). ASE exemplify the U.S. commitment to a citizen's right to free access to information – which is a core tenant of democracy. ASE have modern, high-technology developmental platforms that attract, engage, and inspire the audiences to bring about positive change. Through diverse informational, cultural programs and events, ASE highlight shared values, the importance of bilateral cooperation and the promotion of increased understanding of U.S. policy and perspectives.

## **2.2 Goals**

As one of the Embassy's primary vehicles in strengthening ties between the United States and Eswatini, ASE seek to support the achievement of the following goals:

- Provision of support to the government of Eswatini's HIV/AIDS and Covid-19 response;
- Deepened commitment to democratic governance, human rights, the rule of law, and a market-based economy free from government interference; and
- Increased participation by youth, women, and other disadvantaged groups in civil society and government.

## **2.3 Program Pillars**

ASE focus on the following five program pillars. They:

- a) Provide accurate, timely, and audience-appropriate information about the United States – its history, culture, society, and values.
- b) Facilitate English language learning through access to English language speakers, resources, computers, and the Internet.
- c) Promote U.S. higher education through EducationUSA advising by providing Swati students with accurate, comprehensive, and current guidance on applying to U.S. colleges and universities.
- d) Foster people-to-people connections, increase understanding, and build respect with audiences in Eswatini through cultural programs.
- e) Support continued engagement with U.S. government alumni, connecting them to local audiences through alumni programs where credible local voices can share firsthand information about the United States and American values.

## **2.4 PROGRAMS MANAGEMENT**

ASE's programs and events are non-discriminatory and expect the award recipient to include strategies for integration of individuals/organizations regardless of religion, gender, disability, and ethnicity. The proposal should outline concrete plans on how the applicant will amplify the work of ASE in the local communities and help ASE evolve to meet the changing needs of Eswatini's youth – the program's main target audience. PAS welcomes innovative ideas on how applicants will leverage existing or emerging technologies to enhance engagement, encourage collaboration



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and widen participation within communities and the overall ASE national network. Proposals should also include how organizations will help improve program publicity and outreach efforts.

#### **2.4.1 Priority Areas**

The proposed people-to-people and virtual programs, activities and events should focus on the following priority areas:

**a) Entrepreneurship & Economic Growth**

A continuum of activities that support innovation and entrepreneurship, in particular startups in the social entrepreneurship space that are sustainable and contribute to job creation; activities that encourage trade and investment and other partner relationships between entities in the United States and Eswatini that promote economic growth and prosperity.

**b) Education**

Activities that promote quality higher education, collaboration between U.S. and Eswatini higher educational institutions, skills training, leadership and soft skills development, workforce and technical skills development, sharing of common values and inspiration, Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics (STEAM), and general awareness of international standards and trends in education.

**c) Good Governance / Citizen Participation in Democracy**

Activities aimed at promoting accountability, transparency, efficiency, and effectiveness in local, municipal, provincial, and national governments; freedom of speech; a free and responsible media; voter participation; and civic responsibility.

**d) Human Rights and Dignity**

Activities that encourage women's empowerment and gender equality, grow respect for underserved and underrepresented individuals, empower marginalized and disadvantaged communities, and encourage social inclusion, access to resources, and fundamental human rights for all.

#### **2.4.2 Local Team Member Management**

The award recipient will be responsible for managing existing team members and recruitment and selection of part time program team members. Although exemptions may apply, generally local teams are comprised of at least three members, namely:

- a) Program coordinator,
- b) Technology support, and
- c) Administrative/operations support.

The proposal must demonstrate the capacity of the award recipient to monitor and evaluate team members and conduct open recruitment and selection of new part time team members.



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**2.4.3 Participants and Audiences:**

The target audience is youth aged 16-35 – high school, university students, and young professionals in the four regions of Eswatini.

**2.4.4 Substantial Involvement**

In a cooperative agreement, PAS is substantially involved in program activities above and beyond routine monitoring. PAS anticipates working closely with the recipient organization to ensure that all aspects of the program model support Mission goals and the program pillars.

**2.5 U.S. Government Roles and Responsibilities**

As a cooperative agreement, PAS will have significant involvement in this effort. U.S. Government (USG) responsibilities will include, but are not limited to:

- a) Providing oversight, guidance and assistance in the design, direction, and execution of all ASE program, events and activities;
- b) Approving part time support staff engagements and any changes that are made to local space teams and award recipient staff dedicated to the ASE program;
- c) Reviewing and approving calendar and financial spend plans
- d) Approving decisions related to special circumstances or challenges encountered throughout the duration of the program whether they may be personnel, program or otherwise;
- e) Work with award recipient to publicize the program through various media outlets (such as the social media platforms, the Embassy website, etc.), including approving all program publicity, outreach efforts, and other materials;
- f) Monitor and evaluate the award recipient and the overall management of the ASE program through regular communication with the award recipient, meetings, site visits, and debriefing sessions;
- g) Review periodic reports and provide feedback and counseling, as needed

**2.6 Award Recipient Roles and Responsibilities**

As PAS's implementing partner for the ASE program, the award recipient is expected to deliver on, but are not limited to, the following:

- a) In close collaboration with PAS, manage, monitor and evaluate programs, events, local team members and outreach for all six American Spaces.
- b) Working closely with local teams, develop a calendar of activities for each of the spaces that will achieve Mission goals and address each of the core program pillars.
- c) Recruit local teams on part time basis and in coordination with PAS, arrange in-person or virtual interviews for shortlisted candidates to decide on the final selection.
- d) Provide a plan that defines the nature and extent of services required by any local team members or additional programming subaward recipient(s) (if applicable). Note: The award recipient, as the primary award recipient, is responsible for ensuring the compliance of all sub-award recipients in meeting the requirements of the cooperative agreement.



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- e) Monitoring performance of all local team members; informing and consulting with PAS about any challenges, emergencies, or other issues as well as the progress of necessary corrective action or incidents;
- f) Working with the spaces, create and maintain a database of patrons that will feed into PAS's customer relations management (CRM) program.
- g) Design and disseminate, in coordination with the local team members, periodic newsletters and other outreach plans that will help promote ASE
- h) Ensure strict compliance with State Department and American Spaces branding and signage requirements at all programs and events, outreach and marketing materials
- i) Assist in the organization of the annual ASE training workshop – from the development of training modules to coordination of logistics for each traveling ASE local team member.
- j) Evaluate the overall ASE Program - its impact on the youth and local communities as well as how program and event outcomes fulfill stated Mission goals and objectives.
- k) Manage financial aspects of the program which includes, but is not limited to, the timely disbursement of local team monthly allotments, space supply funds, benefits (where it applies) and other programmatic costs, as well as the timely reporting on any irregularities in the budget or spending to PAS;
- l) When required or needed, submit a travel plan to PAS for approval of all proposed travel of award recipient staff or local team members;
- m) Participate in the development of future programming support funding requests. Identify any programmatic and/or budgetary matters of concern;
- n) Provide monthly programmatic, financial and statistical information to PAS outlining general programmatic activities conducted during the previous month and anticipated programmatic activities to be conducted in the coming month;
- o) Respond fully and promptly to ad hoc requests for program information from PAS;
- p) Ensure compliance with the terms of the cooperative agreement with PAS, including, but not limited to, submitting timely financial and program reports and proper budget oversight.

**3. FEDERAL AWARD INFORMATION**

Length of performance period	:	One year, renewable based on performance
Number of awards anticipated	:	One
Award amount	:	\$16,000
Type of Funding	:	FY20 Smith-Mundt Public Diplomacy Funds
Anticipated program start date	:	October 1, 2020 – September 30, 2021

**This notice is subject to availability of funding.**

**Funding Instrument Type: Cooperative Agreement**



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As a cooperative agreement the United States Government will have substantial involvement in this effort. For more information on the USG's role please see *Section 2.5 – U.S. Government Roles and Responsibilities*.

**Program Performance Period:** Proposed programs should be completed within **12 months**.

The Department of State will entertain applications for continuation grants funded under these awards beyond the initial budget period on a non-competitive basis subject to availability of funds, satisfactory progress of the program, and a determination that continued funding would be in the best interest of the U.S. Department of State.

#### **4. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION**

##### **4.1 Eligible Applicants**

The following organizations are eligible to apply:

- a) Eswatini-based not-for-profit organizations, including think tanks and civil society/non-governmental organizations
- b) Eswatini-based public and private educational institutions

U.S.-based, for-profit or commercial entities are not eligible to apply.

##### **4.2 Cost Sharing or Matching**

Not required.

##### **4.3 Other Eligibility Requirements**

Applicants are only allowed to submit one proposal per organization. If more than one proposal is submitted from an organization, all proposals from that institution will be considered ineligible for funding.

#### **5. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION**

Please follow all instructions below carefully. Proposals that do not meet the requirements of this announcement or fail to comply with the stated requirements will not be considered.

##### **5.1 Content of Application**

Please ensure that:

- a) The proposal clearly addresses all the goals, objectives focus areas of this funding opportunity
- b) All documents are in English
- c) All budgets are in U.S. dollars
- d) All pages are numbered



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- e) All documents are formatted to 8 ½ x 11 inch paper, and
- f) All Microsoft Word documents are single-spaced, 12 point Times New Roman font, with a minimum of 1-inch margins.

For a proposal to be considered, it must adhere to the following:

**5.1.1 Mandatory proposal no more than 15 pages long:**

The proposal should contain sufficient information that anyone not familiar with it would understand exactly what the applicant wants to do. You may use your own proposal format, but it must include all the items below.

- a) **Cover/Title page:** must indicate the funding opportunity title, funding opportunity number, name of organization, amount requested, project leader and contact details
- b) **Proposal Summary:** Short narrative that outlines the proposed program, including program objectives and anticipated impact.
- c) **Introduction to the Organization applying:** Proposals should include (1) the institution's mission and date of establishment; (2) detailed information about proposed partners including a clear delineation of roles and responsibilities; (3) an outline of prior awards, U.S. government and/or private support received, for programs of a similar nature; and (4) descriptions and bios of key staff who will implement the program.
- d) **Program Goals and Objectives:** The “goals” describe what the program is intended to achieve. The “objectives” refer to the intermediate accomplishments towards the attainment of the goals. These should be achievable and measurable.
- e) **Program Activities:** Describe the program activities and how they will help achieve the objectives.
- f) **Program Methods and Design:** A description of how the program is expected to work to solve the stated problem and achieve the goal. Include a logic model as appropriate.
- g) **Proposed Program Schedule and Timeline:** The proposed timeline for the program activities. Include the dates, times, and locations of planned activities and events.
- h) **Key Personnel:** Names, titles, roles and experience/qualifications of key personnel involved in the program. What proportion of their time will be used in support of this program?
- i) **Program Partners:** List the names and type of involvement of key partner organizations and sub-awardees.
- j) **Program Monitoring and Evaluation Plan:** This is an important part of successful grants. Throughout the time-frame of the grant, how will the activities be monitored to ensure they are happening in a timely manner, and how will the program be evaluated to make sure it is meeting the goals of the grant? The plan must consist of indicators with baselines and targets; means for tracking critical assumptions; plans for managing the data collection process; and regular collection of data. The indicators in the plan should be SMART (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Realistic, and Time-framed. More information on M&E plans is located <http://www.state.gov/j/drl/p/c35797.htm>
- k) **Budget and Justification Narrative:** Describe each of the budget expenses in detail. See *Section 12.1 Guidelines for Budget Submissions* below for further information.





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### **5.1.2 Recommendations**

It is recommended that applicants present the following for each project component:

- An overview of the proposed project component and its respective activities.
- A description of how the project component supports the overall goal of the project.
- A detailed outline of the methodology that will be used to implement the proposed component.
- An analysis of anticipated implementation risks and challenges.
- A summary of expected outputs with their expected impact, using performance indicators that will be used to track progress towards the anticipated results.

## **6. STANDARD FORMS**

All applicants are required to **submit the following**:

- **SF-424** (*Application for Federal Assistance – organizations*) at [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov)
- **SF424A** (*Budget Information for Non-Construction programs*) at [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov)
- **SF424B** (*Assurances for Non-Construction programs*) at [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov)

## **7. REQUIRED REGISTRATIONS:**

All organizations applying for grants must obtain these registrations. All are free of charge:

- Unique entity identifier from Dun & Bradstreet (DUNS number)
- NCAGE/CAGE code
- [www.SAM.gov](http://www.SAM.gov) registration

**Step 1:** Apply for a DUNS number and an NCAGE number (these can be completed simultaneously)

***DUNS application:*** Organizations must have a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number from Dun & Bradstreet. If your organization does not have one already, you may obtain one by calling 1-866-705-5711 or visiting <http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform>

***NCAGE application:*** Application page here:  
<https://eportal.nspa.nato.int/AC135Public/scage/CageList.aspx>  
Instructions for the NCAGE application process:  
<https://eportal.nspa.nato.int/AC135Public/Docs/US%20Instructions%20for%20NSPA%20NCAGE.pdf>

For NCAGE help from within the U.S., call 1-888-227-2423





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For NCAGE help from outside the U.S., call 1-269-961-7766  
Email [NCAGE@dlis.dla.mil](mailto:NCAGE@dlis.dla.mil) for any problems in getting an NCAGE code.

**Step 2:** After receiving the NCAGE Code, proceed to register in SAM.gov by logging onto: <https://www.sam.gov>. SAM registration must be renewed annually.

Any applicant listed on the Excluded Parties List System (EPLS) in the System for Award Management (SAM) is not eligible to apply for an assistance award in accordance with the OMB guidelines at 2 CFR 180 that implement Executive Orders 12549 (3 CFR, 1986 Comp., p. 189) and 12689 (3 CFR, 1989 Comp., p. 235), “Debarment and Suspension.” Additionally, no entity listed on the EPLS can participate in any activities under an award. All applicants are strongly encouraged to review the EPLS in SAM to ensure that no ineligible entity is included.

## **8. SUBMISSION DATES AND TIMES**

Applications are due no later than **August 25, 2020**.

**Submission:** All proposals should be submitted via email [pdmmbabanegrants@state.gov](mailto:pdmmbabanegrants@state.gov). Additional information, and standard forms will be required only from the selected recipient.

## **9. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION**

### **9.1 Evaluation Criteria**

Each application will be evaluated and rated on the basis of the evaluation criteria outlined below.

- a) Quality, Innovation and Feasibility of the Program Idea – 25 points:** The program idea is well developed, with detail about how program activities will be carried out. The proposal includes a reasonable implementation timeline.
- b) Institutional Capacity and Track Record – 25 points:** The organization has expertise in its stated field, an institutional record of successful exchange programs and has the internal controls in place to manage federal funds. This includes a financial management system and a bank account.
- c) Program Planning/Ability to Achieve Objectives – 15 points:** Proposals should exhibit originality, innovation, substance, and directly link to Mission and program goals. Proposals should demonstrate a realistic and achievable scope that fits within the budgetary and time parameters set forth in the NOFO.



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- d) Budget and Budget Justification – 10 points:** The budget justification is detailed. Costs are reasonable in relation to the proposed activities and anticipated results. The budget is realistic with the administrative cost for running the program no more than 10% of the overall cost.
- e) Monitoring and evaluation plan – 15 points:** Applicant demonstrates it is able to measure program success against key indicators and provides milestones to indicate progress toward goals outlined in the proposal. The program includes output and outcome indicators, and shows how and when those will be measured.
- f) Multiplier effect/impact -10 points:** Proposed programs should strengthen long-term mutual understanding between the U.S. and Eswatini, including maximum sharing of information and establishment of long-term linkages.

## **9.2 Review and Selection Process**

A Grants Review Committee will evaluate all eligible applications.

## **9.3 Anticipated Announcement and Federal Award Dates**

We expect final funding decisions to be made no later than September 15, 2020. Organizations whose proposals will not be funded will be notified via email.

# **10. FEDERAL AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION**

## **10.1 Federal Award Notices**

The grant award or cooperative agreement will be written, signed, awarded, and administered by the Grants Officer. The assistance award agreement is the authorizing document and it will be provided to the recipient for review and signature by email. The recipient may only start incurring program expenses beginning on the start date shown on the grant award document signed by the Grants Officer.

If a proposal is selected for funding, the Department of State has no obligation to provide any additional future funding. Renewal of an award to increase funding or extend the period of performance is at the discretion of the Department of State.

Issuance of this NOFO does not constitute an award commitment on the part of the U.S. government, nor does it commit the U.S. government to pay for costs incurred in the preparation and submission of proposals. Further, the U.S. government reserves the right to reject any or all proposals received.



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**Payment Method:** Payments will be made in at least four installments, as needed to carry out the program activities.

## **10.2 Administrative and National Policy Requirements**

**Terms and Conditions:** Before submitting an application, applicants should review all the terms and conditions and required certifications which will apply to this award, to ensure that they will be able to comply. These include:

- a) 2 CFR 200,
- b) 2 CFR 600, and
- c) The Department of State Standard Terms and Conditions which are available at: <https://www.state.gov/about-us-office-of-the-procurement-executive/>. Note the U.S Flag branding and marking requirements in the Standard Terms and Conditions.

## **10.3 Reporting**

**Reporting Requirements:** Recipients will be required to submit financial reports and program reports. The award document will specify how often these reports must be submitted.

## **11. FEDERAL AWARDING AGENCY CONTACTS**

If you have any questions about the grant application process, please contact: [pdmabanegrants@state.gov](mailto:pdmabanegrants@state.gov)

Note: We do not provide any pre-consultation for application related questions that are addressed in the NOFO. Once an application has been submitted, State Department officials and staff — both in the Department and at embassies overseas — may not discuss this competition with applicants until the entire proposal review process is completed.

## **12. OTHER INFORMATION**

### **12.1 Guidelines for Budget Justification**

**IMPORTANT:** ASE have a separate budget and mechanism to cater for overheads like internet service subscription, electricity, water, salaries for permanent staff already working in the three spaces.

### **12.2 Allowable Costs:**



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- Personnel and Fringe Benefits: Describe the wages, salaries, and benefits of temporary or permanent staff who will be working directly for the applicant on the program, and the percentage of their time that will be spent on the program.
- Travel: Estimate the costs of travel and per diem for this program, for program staff, consultants or speakers, and participants/beneficiaries.
- Equipment: Describe any machinery, furniture, or other personal property that is required for the program, which has a useful life of more than one year (or a life longer than the duration of the program), and costs at least \$1,000 per unit.
- Supplies: List and describe all the items and materials, including any computer devices, that are needed for the program. If an item costs more than \$1,000 per unit, then put it in the budget under Equipment.
- Contractual: Describe goods and services that the applicant plans to acquire through a contract with a vendor. Also describe any sub-awards to non-profit partners that will help carry out the program activities.
- Other Direct Costs: Describe other costs directly associated with the program, which do not fit in the other categories. For example, shipping costs for materials and equipment or applicable taxes. All “Other” or “Miscellaneous” expenses must be itemized and explained.
- Indirect Costs: These are costs that cannot be linked directly to the program activities, such as overhead costs needed to help keep the organization operating. If your organization has a Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate (NICRA) and includes NICRA charges in the budget, attach a copy of your latest NICRA. Organizations that have never had a NICRA may request indirect costs of 10% of the modified total direct costs as defined in 2 CFR 200.68.
- “Cost Sharing” refers to contributions from the organization or other entities other than the U.S. Embassy. It also includes in-kind contributions such as volunteers’ time and donated venues.
- Alcoholic Beverages: Please note that award funds cannot be used for alcoholic beverages.